

Contributions

THE PRESENT CALL TO THE CHURCH

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Nineteen centuries have passed since the great commission was given by Jesus and yet the majority of mankind are unsaved. A thousand million perish without the gospel in each generation. This can not be the will of God. With him there is no respect of persons. He wills that none should perish but that all should find the eternal life. But God's will must be accomplished thru the church. The church is responsible for the lost of its own generation. The watchword of the Volunteers, "The Evangelization of the World in this Generation" is sane and scriptural. The church of today is responsible for the evangelization of the world that now is. A vast responsibility is thus thrown upon the ministry and the leaders of the church. Are we seeking to meet the responsibility? Will we continue to trifle with the work that God has given into our hands? Will we not become serious, at the least for a moment, and consider the claims that the present generation rightly makes of us? Have you ever thought of the urgency of the great commission? Jesus demands that we give the gospel to the world immediately. His command is "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel." No command of Jesus is simpler. It is personal. Not one of us can escape. Let us not think to deceive ourselves. The command is in the present and for the present. It must mean to us just what it meant to those that heard it fresh from the lips of Jesus. It has never been annulled. The command is perfect as are all of God's commands. Time nor circumstances do not make changes necessary with God since, "Unto Him are known all things from the beginning." We can do naught else but seek to obey the command and are disobedient until we do.

The Apostles felt the force of the command in the way we should feel it. They went everywhere preaching the gospel. If God could ever accept *unpreparedness* as an excuse for not going in obedience to the command he could have excused the early church. But despite the marked unpreparedness of the church and the seemingly insuperable obstacles of the Gentile world, they went earnestly and gladly.

But we are in many ways more fortunate than they. For the first time in the centuries God has removed every obstacle to the immediate evangelization of the world and has given to the church everything needed for the completion of preaching the gospel to the whole world. The world is open and accessible physically, geographically and politically to the gospel preachers and is waiting for them. The church has the means, the messengers and the promise of the Spirit. Christ is waiting for the church to move in obedience to his command. Shall we not move? Is there any sufficient

reason why we should not? Would we dare go to judgment not having given obedience to the Royal Commission? Who among the leaders of God's hosts will risk the responsibility of holding back or of hindering the onward call of today?

The organization and the machinery necessary for the immediate evangelization of the world are all ready and need but to be directed under the quickening breath of the Spirit of God. There are agencies for reaching all classes and conditions of mankind. Every agency needed to reach the whole world is already in existence. The Brethren church is no exception. We are not suffering from a lack of organizations; but all these organizations will inevitably deteriorate into mere machines and become hindrances rather than aids, curses rather than blessings unless they become Spirit-filled and consecrated to the accomplishment of the church's one work—the extending of the kingdom of God.

The reasons, therefore, in favor of a forward movement are unanswerable and overwhelming. As a church with high and noble pretensions we can not be unmindful of God's calls. We believe that he is calling us to go forward. Fields and workers are presenting themselves to us. These are coming unsolicited and it may be unlooked for. Work has already been done in Canada by Brother Swadberg. Montreal is now calling us to come over and help it. Our literature is already going regularly into this city. A mission can be established and without very great expense. Will we establish it or will we ignore the call?

The way is also opening for us into Africa. We now have a worker ready and fully prepared to go and at little expense to the church. What will we do with this call of God? We might have been in South America today if we had seized an opportunity presented a few years ago. *God help us to hear and heed his voice.*

A forward movement has already been organized in the church. Are you ready now to co-operate with the movement? Are you ready and willing to make now a more complete consecration to God? What will you do? For what you do and others like you determine what the church will do. Will you first become aroused and then seek to arouse the one nearest you? Will you pray daily that a burden of souls may be placed upon you? Will you seek to arouse every Christian organization with which you are connected? Our task is great—almost appalling. But listen: "Bring ye all the tithes into the store-house and prove me now therewith, if I will not open the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Why not test God for the once? There are no limits to God's grace in this generation. God must delight in Pentecostal scenes. To have them we need only cast ourselves on the Divine grace in a full consecration.

We beseech you to meditate carefully and

prayerfully and make your own decision regarding your personal duty as an appointed leader of God's hosts. Seek to learn what is God's plan and purpose in your life. Give us and the church your prayers, your counsels and your heartiest co-operation. IS NOT ALL THIS FOR THE MASTER'S GLORY.

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Dear Brethren and Sisters:—Since my last article was published I have lost several feathers from the wings of my ambition. Some of you at least will remember that I said The History of the Tunkers must sell on its merits and that it had the merits, etc. It appears now that I was mistaken. I had good reasons for expecting to get an advertisement published in at least one of the German Baptist papers, and so as soon as I had recovered from my last severe affliction, I prepared and sent in the copy of a notice of the book, offering to pay in advance if required. Promptly the acknowledgement of the receipt of the document was returned, with the statement that inasmuch as the Examining Board would meet in the near future it was deemed best to wait and obtain the consent of that body. The Board met about a month ago, but instead of adding its consent, it turned down the ad. In their notice of the action of the Board, they assured me that the reason was not on account of any ill-feeling against me personally. Hence it must be on account of the de-merits of the book. I will reserve my views of their action for a future article. For the present I have only to say: I am much disappointed and considerably embarrassed by this course of the German Baptist Publishing House.

I had hoped to sell at least two thousand copies of my book to members of that denomination. I did not prepare the work with that view, and would not have written differently if I had known that they would not purchase a single copy, or if I would have had the assurance that they would buy the entire edition. The book was not written with the view of making money by numerous sales. It was written in order to make a true and faithful record of events that were known to the author, and I would not change anything now to which they object—unless it were proven to be an error—if I should not be able to sell them another book. The trouble, however, is not so much in the unwillingness to buy on the part of the laity, as in the difficulty of presenting the opportunity on account of the opposition of the officials. This fact is evident from the expressions of those who have read the book. There are certainly more than two thousand members of the same class who have not yet seen the work and who will be glad for the opportunity of securing a copy.

Hence we must change our tactics; like Mahommed: When the mountain wouldn't come to him he went to the mountain; and